

Message Text

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15

ACTION AF-06

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2939

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 0801

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, KN, KS, NI

SUBJECT: NIGERIAN-KOREAN RELATIONS

REF: STATE 000808

1. NEW NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT HAS NOT, AS DEPARTMENT TOLD SOUTH KOREAN MINISTER DU, SPECIFICALLY REAFFIRMED ITS POLICY OF NON-ALIGNMENT TOWARD DIVIDED COUNTRIES. IN TALKS WITH VARIOUS MINISTRY EXTERNAL AFFAIRS OFFICIALS SINCE COUP, HOWEVER, IT APPEARS THAT HANDS-OFF POLICY WITH REGARD DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION REMAINS PREFERRED STANCE.

2. AT SAME TIME, NIGERIAN PERFORMANCE ON KOREAN QUESTION AT 30TH UNGA AND NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE AT LIMA DOES NOT RPT NOT GIVE ANY CAUSE FOR OPTIMISM THAT SOUTH KOREAN POSITION WITH FMG HAS BEEN IMPROVED WITH CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT. IN FACT OPPOSITE HAS BEEN CASE. NIGERIAN POSITION SEEMS TO HAVE HARDENED IN FAVOR OF NORTH KOREANS, AT LEAST IN INTERNATIONAL FORA WHERE NIGERIA HAS TAKEN FIRM STANCE AMONG NON-ALIGNED IN OPPOSITION U.S. AND ROK POSITIONS.

3. WE HAVE NOT RPT NOT AS YET SEEN ANY INDICATION THAT FMG CONSIDERING DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION OF DPRK NOR HAVE WE NOTED ANY SIGNS OF MOVERS AGAINST SOUTH KOREAN
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TRADE MISSION. OUR READING AT PRESENT IS THAT FMGSATISFIED TO

CONTINUE WITH PRESENT SITUATION.

4. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, SOUTH KOREANS SHOULD BE CAREFUL NOT
RPT NOT PRESS FMG TOO HARD FOR DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION. THEY WOULD
BE BETTER ADVISED CONTINUE QUIETLY BUILD UP TRADE RELATIONS
WHICH MAINTAINS THEIR FOOT IN DOOR AND PROVIDES THEM A PRESENCE
HERE. SHOULD ROK PRESS TOO HARD IT RUNS RISK OF ACTIVATING DPRK
SUPPORTERS IN LAGOS AND WEAKENING POSITION OF THOSE IN
MEA WHO CONTINUE FAVOR CURRENT POLICY. IF ROK NEVERTHELESS BEL-
IEVES IT NECESSARY MAKE APPROACH TO THIS NEW GOVERNMENT TO TEST
THE WATER, WE WOULD URGE IT TO MAKE SOUNDINGS AT UN OR IN
A CAPITAL WHERE SOUTH KOREANS HAVE GOOD PERSONAL RELATIONS
WITH LOCAL NIGERIAN REPRESENTATIVES.
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